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## MARVELS OF STAGE MECHANISM.

THE scenery and stage mechanism at the performance of Wagner's "Parsifal" at Bayreuth must have been marvellous. Appliances quite unknown to American managers seem to have been employed, for instance, to produce the moving scene in the first act, in which Parsifal and Gurnemanz appear to be walking through the forest to the Hall of the Grail. Some idea may be formed of the difficulties to be overcome in the presentation of this effect by the following stage directions in the libretto: "Gradually, while Parsifal and Gurnemanz appear to walk, the scene changes imperceptibly from left to right. The forest disappears; a door opens in rocky cliffs and conceals the two; they are then seen again in sloping passages which they appear to ascend. Long sustained trombone notes softly swell; approaching peals of bells are heard. At last they arrive at a mighty hall, which loses itself overhead in a high vaulted dome, down from which alone the light streams in." These directions, a writer in *The Academy* says, were carried out to the letter. He says: "The Hall of the Grail, again, is a truly splendid scene. On most stages the impression of an enormous

ber of printings." The following detailed description of the process is given in *The Printing Times* and *Lithographer*:

"A photographic negative of the picture to be reproduced is made, and from it are printed five proofs in gray color. An artist who has been used to chromo-lithography is then employed to work up these photo-prints, but instead of working by stippling, hatching, etc., he employs definite tints, composed of white and black, mixed to form five different gradations from white to black. On the one that is to represent the yellow he first paints out in white wherever yellow is not to occur; he paints in black what is to be a full yellow, and the intermediate gradations are laid in with the varying shades of gray. In like manner are painted up the impressions representing the blue, red, gray and brown printings. From these prints photographic negatives are taken of the size the work is to be. Thick glass plates are then covered with a film of gelatine made sensitive to light by means of a bichromate salt. The negatives having been placed upon these plates, they are exposed to light for a few minutes, and are then washed to remove the yellow bichromate salt. They can now be printed from after the manner of

subject demands. Of course there is no necessity for thus limiting the 'blocks' to five, although at present it has not seemed good to the inventor to exceed that number. The results, in gradation and delicacy of tone, are certainly superior to ordinary chromo-lithographs, and we understand they can be produced at such a cost as would allow their being printed 'even on match boxes.' A further advantage over chromo-lithography consists in the fact that reproductions can be obtained direct from nature, instead of invariably following the interpretation of any particular artist. Several instances have been submitted to us of still life subjects, vases, and jugs, taken from the objects themselves, with most satisfactory results. We should like to see a landscape printed in this manner, from nature direct."

## THE LOWELL HOLIDAY CARDS.

SINCE referring last summer to the designs for Christmas and New Year's cards to be published by Messrs. John A. Lowell & Co., of which advance proofs were sent us for notice, we have received the



HOLIDAY CARD DESIGN. BY G. W. EDWARDS.

building is produced by a carefully painted perspective. The immense depth of the stage at Bayreuth allows the large hall itself to be presented as a reality; and it will be seen at once how much is gained by the long processions of knights and youths entering from the back and traversing the entire length of the hall. Wonderfully painted, down to the smallest detail, are the forest and meadow scenes of the first and third acts; while the magic garden of Klingsor in the second, with its luxuriance of tropical vegetation, is a most gorgeous stage picture." The Hall of the Grail was painted as an exact counterpart of the interior of the Aya Sophia at Constantinople.

## THE RIVAL OF CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHY.

LAST month our London correspondent referred to the new Hoeschotype process, which claims to "reproduce works of nature or of art in facsimile or natural colors" in five printings at most, "with greater truthfulness and with greater delicacy than can be obtained by means of chromo-lithography by five times the num-

ber of printings." The following detailed description of the process is given in *The Printing Times* and *Lithographer*:

"The manner of production in this new method will be easily understood from the above description by any one conversant with the 'Woodbury' process of printing photographs. Where the new process most palpably shows its superiority to chromo-lithography is in the fact that every grade of intensity, from the lightest to the darkest, of a particular color, is obtained at one printing. The order of color precedence in the printing is first yellow, then red, of the particular tone required, then blue, giving the greens, etc., then gray deepening into black, to give the requisite force, and finally the peculiar general tint of local color which the

entire series. The cards are all in black and white, but are engraved on steel with so much delicacy that artistically we consider them much superior to the average holiday card printed in colors. Of their graceful fancy if design the reader will be able to judge by the examples we have reproduced by permission of the publishers. It is due to the latter that we should remind the reader that in reproducing them, and slightly enlarging them, it has been impossible to retain the mechanical delicacy of the originals.

THERE is a class of sitters who insist upon being painted precisely "as they are;" they desire no modifications, but wish to see simply their veritable selves without flattery or qualification. Frequently the younger artist, in the simplicity of his inexperience, endeavors to meet their wishes; but however satisfactory, in certain cases, such a portrait may be to the artist, it was never yet wholly agreeable to a sitter; for in respect of personal appearance human nature is at least "indifferent honest," and does not love unpalatable truths,